

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 00452 261429Z
ACTION OPR-02

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO AMCONSUL STUTTGART
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2449
AMEMBASSY ROME
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 0452

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: AEMR
SUBJ: FLAG FOCUS ONE: CRITIQUE

REF: STUTTGART 1628 DTG 030959Z DEC 76

1. ALTHOUGH ADDIS ABABA PARTICIPANTS OFFERED EXTENSIVE
ORAL COMMENTS IN ROME, REGARDING E&E EXERCISE FLAG
FOCUS ONE, THESE CAN BE SUMMARIZED IN BRIEF AS FOLLOWS:

THE KEY WORD IN THE EXERCISE WAS FOCUS. ALTHOUGH ALL OF
FSO PARTICIPANTS HAVE AT SOME TIME HAD RESPONSIBILITY
EITHER FOR DRAWING UP AN E&E PLAN AT THEIR POST OR
FOR EDITING AND APPROVING ONE, NEVER BEFORE PERHAPS HAD
THEY HAD SUCH A CONCENTRATED OPPORTUNITY, NOR THE INCEN-
TIVE, TO FOCUS ON MULTITUDE OF PROBLEMS THAT ACTUALLY
COULD FACE MISSION IN TIME OF CRISIS (EXCEPT FOR THOSE
OFFICERS WHO ACTUALLY HAVE PARTICIPATED IN AN EVACUATION).

2. LESSONS LEARNED BROUGHTHOME, AS NO DRAWING
BOARD DRAFTING COULD HAVE DONE, HOW MANY CONTINGENCIES
ARE NOT ACCOUNTED FOR IN MANY EXISTING E&E PLANS.

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ALTHOUGH U.S. MILITARY ALMOST BY DEFINITION MUST PLAY
CRUCIAL ROLE IN CARRYING OUT EVACUATION IN MANY
CASES, SO OFTEN THE MECHANICS OF HOW POST CAN FACILI-
TATE THAT ROLE ARE LEFT VAGUE AT BEST IN PLAN. IN-
SIGHTS GAINED ON THESE PROBLEMS AND OVERALL AWARE-
NESS OF LIMITATIONS UNDER WHICH MISSION MUST OPERATE
IN MANY CRISES SHOULD ENABLE THIS POST MARKEDLY TO IM-

PROVE ITS OWN PLAN, DESPITE FACT THAT EVACUATION PROBLEM HERE BEARS LITTLE RESEMBLANCE TO THAT SIMULATED IN CPX.

3. SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON EXERCISE:

A) PROBLEM OF PACING CPX THROUGH TWO FULL DAYS DEPENDED TO LARGE EXTENT UPON ROLE TO WHICH EACH OFFICER ASSIGNED. THOSE WITH JUICY JOBS HAD NO DIFFICULTY SUSTAINING THEIR INTEREST, ALTHOUGH GENERAL TENSION DID SUBSIDE NOTABLY DURING SECOND DAY. PART OF THIS SLACKING OFF CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO FACT THAT PARTICIPANTS SPENT MUCH OF FIRST DAY GETTING USED TO DESIGNATED ROLES AND SORTING OUT DIVISION OF LABOR. BY SECOND DAY TEAM WAS ESTABLISHED AND COULD ANDLE EACH NEW CONTINGENCY IN STRIDE AS SOON AS IT WAS DELIVERED. MAJORITY OF PARTICIPANTS DID FELL, HOWEVER, THAT EXERCISE SHOULD EITHER BE SHORTENED OR RESTRUCTURED TO KEEP EVERYONE GOING AT FULL SPEED.

B) ALL FSO PARTICIPANTS WERE IMPRESSED BY CARE, GOOD PLANNING, AND HARD WORK CONTROL TEAM HAD PUT INTO EXERCISE IN ADVANCE TO MAXIMIZE REALISM OF CRISIS SITUATION. WITH FEW EXCEPTIONS, AND THOSE FOR MOST PART INVOLVING POLITICAL INPUTS ALREADY COMMENTED ON ORALLY IN ROME, CRISIS DEVELOPED IN LOGICAL FASHION, MAKING IT VASTLY EASIER FOR PARTICIPANTS TO GET INTO TRUE SPIRIT OF CPX.

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4. ABORT OF U.S. MARINE PORTION OF FTX WAS REGRETTEED. NEVERTHELESS, ALL FSO PARTICIPANTS BENEFITED FROM OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE IN SIMULATED RECEPTION ON BOARD OF EVACUEES AND TO DISCUSS TASK FORCE MISSION WITH OFFICERS AND CREW. VANTAGE POINT FROM ON BOARD ADDED ONE MORE ELEMENT OF REALISM TO EXERCISE.

5. ALTHOUGH APPRECIATIVE OF CONSIDERATIONS WHICH MAKE REGULAR REPETITIONS OF FLAG FOCUS-TYPE EXERCISES DESIRABLE, THIS POST BELIEVES PARTICIPATION ONCE DURING TOUR OF DUTY OF OFFICERS CONCERNED IS SUFFICIENT. IN PRACTICE, THIS WOULD PROBABLY WORK OUT TO MEAN ONCE EVERY 18 MONTHS TO TWO YEARS BUT COULD CHANGE DEPENDING UPON PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS. PRESUMABLY, THEREFORE, IF ELG DECIDES TO SCHEDULE EXERCISES MORE FREQUENTLY, IT WILL WANT TO VARY MIX OF PARTICIPATING POSTS.

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